

**Planning Commissioner's Written Comments  
July 9, 2013**

**Carolina Crossing II (Z1200004)**

Ms. Beechwood – I voted against this rezoning. The recently concluded NC54 Corridor Study spent 5 years and hundreds of thousands of public dollars to craft a plan that includes the parcel that is currently requesting rezoning. The NC54 Corridor study represents a mammoth effort on the part of municipalities, neighborhoods, multi-level agencies and citizens to determine the future course of development in this area. Preserving the livability and character of the residential communities surrounding the corner of Farrington Rd and NC54 (Celeste Circle, Cleora Drive, Crescent Drive) were of particular concern to the study and great care was taken to include the stakeholders in these areas. The Corridor Study recommendation is that the parcel in question remains residential (“Residential 1, mostly multi-family with neighborhood supporting uses”).

Additionally, the NC54 Corridor Study initiated multiple traffic engineering studies addressing the I-40 / Farrington Rd / NC54 interchange to tackle the current and future impacts of growth on these roadways. Any roadway improvements proffered by any applicant in this area should be done within the context of the Corridor Study.

The planning department states in their report that Council has not yet adopted the NC54 Corridor study. From my perspective, that does not discredit the recommendation of the study that this parcel remain residential. For these reasons, it is inappropriate to change the zoning of this parcel from RS-20 to OI(D).

Ms. Bielen – I’m concerned about the proposed height of the development (7floors), but in general am not against this use on this land. I think something more appropriate could be proposed that wouldn’t tower over nearby homes. I would also hope that storm water regulations will not only control runoff from the added impervious surface from the development, but that it might even improve the existing drainage problems. An extra effort to this end on the part of the developer might mitigate effects and earn some goodwill. The developer owes the neighborhood more information and communication going forward.

Ms. Board - I opposed this case for the following reasons listed on the sheet: traffic congestion & inadequate infrastructure, inconsistency with neighboring land uses, and opposition from the community.

This development is completely inappropriate for this property. Travel to and from this site will significantly increase traffic in possibly the most congested intersection in the triangle. Our

Planners have been aware of this problem and have worked on the Collector Street Plan, the Light Rail Proposal, and the Highway 54 Corridor Study to determine the best way to grow and develop land on and around this corridor and still keep it a desirable place to live and work. In the case of the the Hwy 54 Corridor Study, hundreds of citizens contributed to the plan proposals. The Hwy 54 Corridor Study has been accepted by the MPO and should be respected. It specifies that this property should be residential and an entirely different path to improving the intersection at Hwy 54 and Farrington Rd.

The DOT report lists the additional lanes required to increase road capacity for this project, but very clearly states that those changes will not improve the intersection beyond the current 107% of LOS D. What it doesn't discuss is the significant problems that will be caused during the road work, or the safety concerns that would result from these changes. This is not a simple intersection. Because the Farrington Rd and I-40 intersections are so very close and there so many lanes, there is a lot of lane changing happening over this very short stretch.

Those changes can be dangerous enough now, but the addition of both extra lanes and extra cars will make it even more dangerous. Cars exiting from I-40W and headed to Chapel Hill already have to dodge the cars traveling on I-40E who turn right onto Hwy 54 and then cross three lanes of traffic to turn south onto Farrington. This proposal would introduce a fourth lane change to that scenario. The double left turns from Farrington onto Hwy 40 will mostly serve vehicles which then immediately exit onto I-40. A car in the leftmost lane wishing to exit on I-40 E will have precious little time to cross the other lane of tightly packed cars to make the turn - and we know we have drivers on our roads who will attempt it. There are already too many wrecks in this area exacerbating the congestion -- the last thing we need is more of them.

I very strongly recommend that this zoning case be denied.

Mr. Davis – Vote denial.

Mr. Gibbs – Voted to approve.

Mr. Harris – Voted for motion to approve.

Mr. Padgett – Voted approval. Site improvements needed for area. Tax base a positive. Only 2 showed to voice concerns while the majority was in favor. Improvements could only make run off and traffic better. By the admission of the two opposed they already have run off issues. By future requirements to fix issues it is a win win situation. I would suggest the Board look at it in a more defined plan and not through the Emotional thought process. Regulations in place will resolve issues. That is what will move Durham forward or backward. In this case it will be forward.

Mr. Smudsj – The main concern is additional traffic in an area that is already bad. The proposed road additions committed in the plan will offset these issues and start improving the overall traffic flow.

Mr. Whitley – I voted not to approve. I have concerns about traffic and no runoff.